CALL: Promoting Creative/Critical Thinking and Facilitating Skills Integration
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Input Processing

- Van Patten's input processing principles

  1. Learners process content words in the input before anything else.

  2. Learners prefer processing lexical items to grammatical items for semantic information.

  3. Learners prefer processing more meaningful morphology before less or non-meaningful morphology, for example, simple past regular endings rather than redundant verbal agreement.

- Participants

  1. Six second-year university level Spanish classes at the University of Illinois. Two classes were randomly assigned to one of three groups.

  2. One group was a control and received no instructional treatment aside from their regular classroom instruction which was based on a communicative methodology modeled on the Natural Approach. Grammar instruction was limited to textbook and workbook exercises done as homework.

  3. A second group received a treatment of traditional instruction.

  4. A third group received input processing instruction.

- Traditional Instruction

  1. Traditional instruction – involves explanation and output of a grammatical point

  2. Explanations are given concerning the form and position of direct object pronouns within a sentence.

  3. Presentation is via a paradigmatic chart that included all persons and an explanation of what objects and object pronouns are.

  4. Placement of object pronouns within a sentence was also discussed.

  5. Practice – learners practice how to make sentences with direct object pronouns with both written and oral production activities.

- Input processing - involves explanation and practice/experience processing input data

  1. Students are taught to interpret OVS stings correctly.

  2. Concept of subject and object are contrasted.

  3. Both subject and object pronouns are presented.

  4. It was emphasized that in Spanish, unlike English, it is possible to have sequences of the type object pronoun-verb-subject.

  5. Full object nouns may be placed before the verb and are case marked with the preposition *a*:

     Example - A Maria la llama Juan.

  6. Practice – students respond to informational content of OV strings.